

REMARKS

Claims 15-23, 37-40, 42 and 43 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 42 is amended to depend from allowed claim 15. Claim 41 is canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer of, the subject matter recited therein. No new matter is added. Reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration because the amendments only cancel an independent claim and change a dependency of a dependent claim; and (c) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of claims 15-23 and 37-40.

The Office Action rejects claims 41-43 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The Office Action asserts that claim 41 is indefinite. Claim 41 is canceled by this Amendment. Claims 42 and 43 do not recite the indefinite language of claim 41. Therefore, the rejection is moot. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.


The Office Action rejects claims 41-43 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,692,292 to Asai et al. in view of JP-4-123493. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, claim 41 is canceled by this amendment. Claim 42 is amended to depend from allowed claim 15. Therefore, claims 42 and 43 are allowable at least for the dependence on allowed claim 15, as well as for the additional features they recite. As such, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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